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FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9087  
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5070  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 2544  
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1025  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 0976  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 1869  
RUEHPB/AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY 3816  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 4618  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 2010  
RUEHBA/AMCONSUL PERTH 0821  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RHHJJPI/USPACOM HONOLULU HI  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 001020

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DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS  
NSC FOR E. PHU

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [PINS](#) [ID](#)  
SUBJECT: EAST KALIMANTAN -- RESOURCE-RICH PROVINCE PREPARES  
TO HEAD TO THE POLLS

REF: JAKARTA 855 AND PREVIOUS

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4(b+d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: East Kalimantan Province, one of Indonesia's richest provinces in terms of natural resources, goes to the polls May 26 for its first ever direct gubernatorial elections. The race is close. The indigenous Dayak people--perhaps 10 percent of the population--could prove a key swing vote and decide the election. If its ticket wins, the Islamic PKS party--which has won two recent gubernatorial elections--will pick up additional traction on a national level. END SUMMARY.

#### ELECTION IN EAST KALIMANTAN

12. (C) On May 26, East Kalimantan goes to the polls to elect its governor and vice-governor. As with many Indonesian regions in recent years, the election will be the first ever direct election of its type. The province, which is rich in natural resources and large in terms of size, is relatively sparse in terms of population with only about three-to-four million residents. DepPol/C is visiting the region May 22-24 to assess the political situation ahead of the election. (Note: East Kalimantan is one of Indonesia's richer provinces in terms of natural resources with supplies of oil, natural gas, palm oil, gold, and coal. The province annually sends billions of dollars to the central government's coffers.)

#### A CLOSE RACE

13. (C) The race for governor is close, and--due to the region's complicated ethnic tapestry--hard to predict. Civil society leaders DepPol/C spoke with agreed that the four sets of candidates are relatively uninspiring. Consequently, voter turnout is expected to be relatively low. Brief descriptions of the four main tickets follow:

-- The Indonesian Party of Democratic Struggle (PDI-P) team of Nusyirwan Ismail and Heru Bambang is considered relatively

strong. Bambang hails from Java and has strong support from the sizable Javanese migrant community. PDI-P--which is in opposition to the national government led by President Yudhoyono--benefits from a strong grassroots network.

-- Golkar party candidates Jusuf SK and Luther Kombong are running on the traditional strength of the Golkar political machine. Jusuf is considered to have been an effective mayor of a mid-sized city (Tarakan). Kombong is the only Christian candidate in the race.

-- A coalition of Dayak groups has agreed to support the coalition of the Democratic Party, the United Development Party (PPP), the National Mandate Party (PAN) and other small parties in backing the team of Awang Farouk Iskak and Farid Wadjidy. Farouk is half-Dayak.

-- The fourth team consists of Achmad Amins and Hadi Mulyadi. Amins is running under the Pancasila Patriot Party banner. Mulyadi is from the Islamic-oriented Prosperous Justice Party (PKS). As a provincial PKS legislator, Mulyadi might be able to mobilize PKS and other Muslim elements cadres in East Kalimantan.

#### DAYAKS ARE KEY

14. (C) The indigenous Dayaks compose about 10 percent of the population and are a key voting block. Ellyano S. Lasam, Chair of the Dayak Traditional Council, told DepPol/C that Dayaks are the most impoverished of all voters in East Kalimantan. Lasam said "outsiders" in government and industry discriminate against Dayaks, regarding them as "primitive savages." The Dayak's percentage of the

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population has diminished over the years, namely due to Indonesia's previous transmigration policy of moving people from overcrowded Java to Kalimantan.

15. (C) Dayaks finally realized a governor of their own ethnicity when Yurnalis Ngayoh took the helm two years ago in the wake of a corruption scandal involving the previous governor, who is now behind bars. In a bit of a surprise, however, PDI-P chose a non-Dayak as their gubernatorial candidate, resulting in widespread Dayak protests two months ago (reftel). It is not clear which ticket Dayaks will support in the governor's race, but it is a factor that could swing the election.

#### A NATIONAL BELLWETHER?

16. (C) The complicated electoral factors in East Kalimantan seem unique to the region, lessening the impact of the outcome of the governor's race as a possible national bellwether. That said, if its team wins, PKS--which has won two recent gubernatorial elections--will probably pick up additional traction on a national level. Based on DepPol/C's soundings, residents are hoping that the new governor will find a way to use more of the province's vast wealth from natural resources to address basic needs. While the area is rich in natural resources, the feeling is that not enough of the proceeds from that wealth is used for East Kalimantan's needs, despite decentralization policies.

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